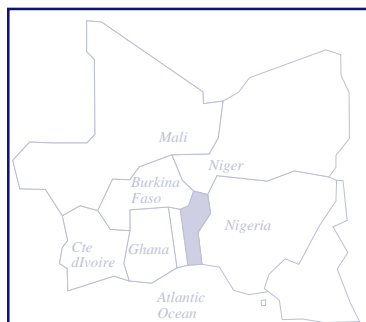
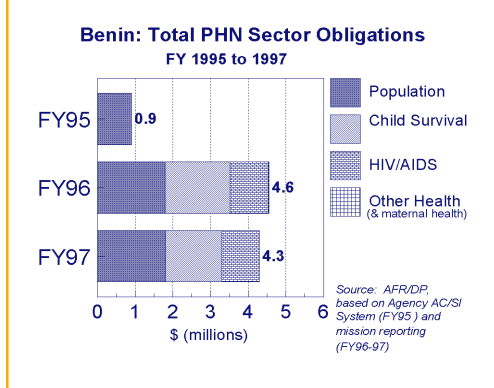


USAID Country Program Brief, October 1998
Family Planning and Health Activities in
Benin



Population:	5.9 million (UN estimate for 1997)
Infant mortality rate:	94 deaths per 1,000 births (1996 DHS)
Adequate nutrition (wt.-for-age):	71% of children age 12–23 months (1996 DHS)
Total fertility rate:	6.3 children per woman (1996 DHS)
Contraceptive prevalence rate:	3.4% (all women/modern methods, 1996 DHS)
Demographic and Health Survey:	1996

USAID/Benin's current country strategic plan, covering mission activities from 1998 to 2003, pursues a partnership program with the Government of Benin, the international donor community, and concerned nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Benin. Agencywide funding trends for family planning (FP), child survival, and prevention of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) in Benin are illustrated in the figure to the right. The figure does not include substantial humanitarian assistance funding (roughly \$1.9 million in FY98) for PL 480 Title II food aid programs. In addition to complementary objectives in education and democracy and governance, the mission is pursuing the following strategic objective and intermediate results (IRs) in family planning and health.



Strategic Objective 2: Increase the use of FP/MCH/STD/HIV services and prevention measures within a supportive policy environment.

- IR2.1: Improve policy environment.
- IR2.2: Increase access to FP/MCH/STD/HIV services and products.
- IR2.3: Improve quality of FP/MCH/STD/HIV management and prevention services.
- IR2.4: Increase demand for and practices supporting use of FP/MCH/STD/HIV services, products, and prevention measures.

(AIDS: acquired immune deficiency syndrome, FP: family planning, HIV: human immunodeficiency virus, MCH: maternal-child health, STD: sexually transmitted disease).

USAID/Benin's Activities in the Health Sector

Promotion of Integrated Family Health. Building on past and ongoing activities in family planning and health, the mission's program supports integrated family health services implemented by private voluntary organizations (PVOs) in a target region in the North of Benin, Borgou, along with selected policy initiatives and social marketing of family planning and health commodities at the national level. To produce a sound basis for program planning and management, USAID has funded various assessments and surveys, including the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) in 1996 and important sector analyses on family planning and nutrition. Also contributing to the second strategic objective are a PL 480 Title II nutrition program, a girls primary education initiative, including a major health promotion component, and a democracy and governance program to strengthen the capacity of local government and a wide variety of local NGOs, including the Beninese Health NGO Network, ROBS.

Promotion of Family Planning. Since the official adoption of a population policy by the Government of Benin (GOB) in 1996, the mission has continued to advocate for and support efforts to reform inhibitive policies and laws and help build a sustainable network of integrated family planning services. Ongoing initiatives supported by the mission, USAID's regional Family Health and AIDS - West Africa Project (FHA-WCA), and various collaborating USAID/Global Bureau projects, include social marketing of condoms and oral contraceptives; promotion of community-based distribution (CBD) of contraceptives; training in commodity logistics and provision of reproductive health services; integration of family planning into medical school curricula; and NGO capacity building in the areas of IEC; and program management. The mission also sees its work in developing primary education as integral to lowering the fertility rate in Benin.

Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS/STDs. USAID's condom social marketing program, implemented through Population Services International (PSI) with the Benin Association for Social Marketing (ABMS), is the major HIV/AIDS prevention activity in Benin. USAID also supports a variety of other IEC-related activities, including training of outreach workers to promote STI/HIV sensitivity in the community, capacity building for women's professional groups active in HIV/STI prevention and control, and development of advocacy tools for improved AIDS policies. The mission provides support to Benin's National AIDS Control Program to improve management capacity and help clarify the program's coordinating role.

Child Survival. USAID/Benin has focused on improving child survival in Benin through support for social marketing of oral rehydration salts, training of village health volunteers, dissemination of IEC materials, and various additional child survival activities managed by UNICEF/Benin. At the policy level, the mission and its partners are advocating for the nationwide adoption of the integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) approach; a corresponding standard package of child survival services is at the core of the mission's integrated family health program for the Borgou region and will also be introduced in the Oueme region, where Africare is implementing a child survival project under a grant from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Response, Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation. With mission support, Africare will also assess the possibility of implementing the Africa Integrated Malaria Initiative in the Oueme region. The mission continues to support extensive nutritional education, rehabilitation, and income generation activities under a nationwide MCH program implemented by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) through PL 480 Title II food aid.

Global Bureau and USAID/Benin Joint Planning Activities

Basic Support for Institutionalizing Child Survival Project has conducted nutrition and IMCI program assessments, advocated for improved child survival policies, provided IEC capacity building, and will help introduce standard child survival packages in the Borgou region and, through Africare, in the Oueme region.

John Hopkins Program for International Education in Reproductive Health is working with Beninese partners to integrate reproductive health into the curricula of medical and paramedical schools.

Primary Providers' Education and Training in Reproductive Health is providing reproductive health training in the Borgou region and through the ROBS NGO network. With the Ministry of Health, the project conducted a national needs assessment and helped revise standards of care and protocols.

POLICY Project assists government officials and civil society in understanding the impact of rapid population growth and the spread of HIV/AIDS on available resources. POLICY is assisting the Ministry of Plan to implement Benin's population policy and provides support to the ROBS network.

Population Technical Assistance Project supports the mission in strategic planning exercises and program design for the integrated family health program.

Macro International conducted a DHS in 1996, in collaboration with the GOB, to collect baseline data. A second round is planned for 2000 - 2001.

Population Leaders Program (PLP) is implemented by Western Consortium for Public Health and recruits, places and administratively supports mid- to senior-level advisors in USAID, the GOB and NGOs for two-year assignments.

Implementing AIDS and Prevention & Control Activities (IMPACT) is implemented by Family Health International and assists missions in implementing programs that result in reduced sexual risk of HIV acquisition, improved STI prevention and management, minimizing contextual and policy constraints, increasing linkages between prevention and care, and improving program monitoring and evaluation.

Field support in Benin is also provided by the following Global Bureau projects:

Africa Integrated Malaria Initiative
Central Contraceptive Procurement
Environmental Health Project
Family Planning Logistics Management
Food & Nutrition Monitoring & Support

MEASURE 1
Population Council
Population Leadership Program
U.S. Bureau of the Census/AIDS Prevention
and Control Program



This USAID Country Program Brief was prepared for the Human Resources Division, Office of Sustainable Development, USAID Africa Bureau (AFR/SD/HRD), by the Center for International Health Information (CIHI). Questions and comments can be directed to CIHI (info@cihi.com).